



EDSE 4330 - Special Ed Law&Procedures

Fall 2025 Syllabus, Section 180, CRN 16024

Instructor Information

Brenda Benavides

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Office Hours:

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Office Hours: Virtual Meeting or Live Chat by Appointment

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Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

Examine the basic principles of IDEA and special education laws with emphasis on IEP requirements; legal and educational terminology and definitions for students with exceptionalities; cases and trends in special education law with case analyses; exploration of the historical, philosophical, and ethical perspectives of diversity and its impact on the educational services for students with special needs. Prerequisites: Admitted to and in good standing in the College of Education or permission of instructor.

Educational Programs Department, College of Education

Student Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will explore the history of special education laws, provisions of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and legal trends and issues in special education.

At the completion of this course, students are expected to:

- Describe the major provisions of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*, *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, *No Child left Behind Act* of 2001, and other federal and state laws affecting the education of students with disabilities.
- Identify and explain the major principles of the IDEA and litigation leading to the passage of the IDEA.
- Analyze the major court rulings on the IDEA and legal trends in special education.
- Identify and explain the major principles of the NCLB.
- Develop legally sound policies and procedures with respect to special education in accordance with the legislation and litigation.
- Analyze the results of litigation using the case briefing form.
- Demonstrate critical understanding of the role of special education teachers and school professionals, such as an Educational Diagnostician, a Speech-language Pathologist or School Psychologist, in the context of special education law and procedures to advocate students with disabilities and their families.

Important Dates

Visit the Academic Calendar ([tamiu.edu](https://www.tamiu.edu/academiccalendar/)) (<https://www.tamiu.edu/academiccalendar/>) page to view the term's important dates.



Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	The Law and Special Education (5th. Ed.)	Yell, M, (2015)	9780135175361, 0135175364

Other Course Materials

a. *Texas Education Agency - Special Education Rules and Regulations:*

Texas Education Agency (<https://tea.texas.gov/>)

b. TEA-Notice of Procedural Safeguards (<https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/news-and-multimedia/correspondence/taa-letters/the-notice-of-procedural-safeguards/>)

1. Articles:

- Hersh C. L. & Johansen, I. M. (2007). *Free appropriate public education in the fourth circuit.*
- Thomas, S. B. & Rapport, M. K. (1998). Least restrictive environment: Understanding the direction of the courts. *The Journal of Special Education*, 32(2), 66-78.
For certification programs only:

2. *Educator program standards* Texas Educator Standards (<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/preparation-and-continuing-education/approved-educator-standards/>)

3. *Certification domains/competencies* (<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/preparation-and-continuing-education/approved-educator-standards/>)TEXES Practice Tests (<http://cms.texas-ets.org/texas/testframeworks/>)

4. TEKS (<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/preparation-and-continuing-education/approved-educator-standards/>)Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=6148&menu_id=720&menu_id2=785)

5. *College and Career Readiness Standards* <https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/agency-publication/miscellaneous/crs-tx-ccrs-final-2009/> (<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/preparation-and-continuing-education/approved-educator-standards/>)

Grading Criteria

Grading and Evaluation:

In this course, the course week begins on Monday; therefore, Day 1 is Monday and Day 7 is Sunday. Each module opens on Monday (Day 1) at 12:00 a.m. **The submission for all assigned works is due by at 11:59 p.m. on the designated day in Central time.**

- The due dates for Discussion Board are on Wednesday (Day 3) for the initial post and on Friday (Day 5) for two substantive responses to colleagues' post.
- Each module has a quiz that contains a set of questions to check for your understanding about topics covered, and the due date is Sunday (Day 7). You have a week to work on questions on the quiz while working on learning materials and participating in assigned activities. Results and feedback will be available in a week after the due date.

Grades for this course will be determined through the following assignments and tasks:

- Syllabus Acknowledgment & Meet and Greet Forum** (1%)
- Discussion Forum** (10 Pts.) Twelve discussion forums are set in this course. You are expected to react to forum topics through sharing your ideas based on what you've learned from reading and learning materials and challenging each other.
- Weekly Module Quiz** (20 Pts.) Each week you are expected to submit the completed module quiz by the due date set. Questions on the quiz are directly from the assigned readings, learning materials, and module activities. You will be able to review all answers and feedback after all attempts are graded.
- Exams** (Midterm 200 Pts.; Final 161 Pts): Two exams will be given during the semester. Check the course schedule for the dates. The final exam will be comprehensive in nature. The exams will focus on the textbook information and materials covered in modules.
- Case Law Analysis** (140 Pts.): The objective of this assignment is to prepare students to be able to apply the legal and ethical requirements to the field of education and special education. You are required to select a case law in special education and examine the case. Further details of the assignment are available in the assignment guide and rubric, which are available inside the folder named "Case Law Analysis" in the course website on Blackboard.



Assignments and Assessments:

Assignments are due by the Sunday at the end of each school week. The instructor will provide feedback within a week after the assignment/assessment deadlines. If the instructor is unable to do so, the instructor will provide an announcement or email to inform the students of the change for that week. In determining the final course grade, the College of Education's Grading Scale is used.

Late/Missing Tasks/Assignments:

Late assignments will not be accepted unless extenuating circumstances are present. In these cases, you must discuss the situation as soon as possible with me. Any homework sets submitted late without my approval will receive zero credit. The due date for each assignment has been published in the Tentative Course Schedule. Work turned in by 11:59 PM Central Standard Time on the due date will be considered on time.

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Below 60%

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/25	Week of 08/25-08/31 Module 1 Module 2	Reading: Course syllabus Textbook: Chapter 1 Overview of the Course Chapter 1. Introduction to American Legal System Federalism • Sources of Law • Court Structure • Law and Special Education Discussion Forum #1 Module 1 Quiz Chapter 3. The History of the Law and Children with Disabilities • Brown v. Board of Education; PARC v. Pennsylvania; Mills v. Board of Education • Case Law and Legislation that Shaped Special Education Reading: Summary of the history of special education # Textbook: Chapter 3 Discussion Forum #2 Module 2 Quiz	Discussion Forum #1: Initial post; Responses to peers (Day 6) Module 1 quiz (Day 7) Discussion Forum #2: Initial post; Responses to peers (Day 6) Module 2 quiz (Day 7)
9/1	Week of 09/01-09/07 Module 3	Discussion Forum #3 Module 3 Quiz Reading: # Special Education Rules and Regulations/Texas State Laws # Textbook: Chapter 4 Chapter 4. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) • Development of the IDEA • Purpose and Structure of the IDEA • IDEA and Reauthorization Process	Discussion Forum #3: Initial post; Responses to peers (Day6) Module 3 quiz (Day 7)
9/8	Week of 09/08-09/14 Module 4	Discussion Forum #4 Module 4 Quiz Reading: # Articles posted on the course website # Textbook: Chapters 5 & 6 Chapters 5 & 6: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); • Major Principles of Section 504 and ADA • Comparison of the IDEA, Section 504	Discussion Forum #4:Initial post; Responses to peers (Day 6) Module 4 quiz (Day 7)



9/15	Module 5 Week of 09/15-09/21	Discussion Forum #5 Module 5 Quiz Reading: # ESSA article # Textbook: Chapter 7 Chapter 7. Every Student Succeeds Act • Purpose, Goals, and Structure of NCLB • ESSA, Race to the Top	Discussion Forum #5: Initial post; Responses to peers (Day 6) Module 5 quiz (Day 7)
9/22	Week of 09/22-09/28 Midterm EXAM		
9/29	Week of 09/29-10/05 Module 6	Discussion Forum #6 Module 6 Quiz Reading: # Free Appropriate Public Education in the Fourth Circuit Textbook: Chapter 8 Chapter 8. Free Appropriate Public Education • FAPE Mandate and Components of the IDEA • Litigation and FAPE Methodology/Placement and FAPE	Discussion Forum #6 Initial post; Responses to peers (Day 6) Module 6 quiz (Day 7)
10/6	Week of 10/06-10/12 Module 7	Discussion Forum#7 Module 7 Quiz Reading: # PACER Center Action: Evaluation Textbook: Chapter 9 Chapter 9. Identification, Assessment, and Evaluation • Assessment/Evaluation Process • Protection in Evaluation Procedures • Interpreting Evaluation Data	Discussion Forum #7: Initial post; Responses to peers (Day 6) Module 7 quiz (Day 7)
10/13	Week of 10/13-10/19 Module 8	Discussion Forum#8 Module 8 Quiz Reading: # SMART IEPs # IEP Process Flowchart # Textbook: Chapter 10 Chapter 10. Individualized Education Program • Purposes of IEP • IEP Mandate and Development • Litigation on IEP	Discussion Forum #8: Initial post; Responses to peers (Day 6) Module 8 quiz (Day 7)
10/20	Week of 10/20-10/26 Module 9	Discussion Forum#9 Module 9 Quiz Reading: # Article: Least Restrictive Environment: Understanding the Direction of the Courts # Textbook: Chapter 11 Chapter 11. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and Procedural Safeguards • Continuum of Alternative Placements • Judicial Standards of Review • Standards for Determining LRE	Discussion Forum #9 Initial post; Responses to peers (Day 6) Module 9 quiz (Day 7)
10/27	Week of 10/27-11/02 Module 10	Discussion Forum#10 Module 10 Quiz Reading: # Notice of Procedural Safeguards # Textbook: Chapter 12 Chapter 12. Procedural Safeguards • Procedural Rights of Parents and Procedural Requirements • Dispute Resolution	Discussion Forum #10: Initial post; Responses to peers (Day 6) Module 10 quiz (Day 7)
11/3	Week of 11/03-11/09 Module 11	Discussion Forum #11 Module 11 Quiz Reading: # Manifestation Determination # Discipline Flowchart # Textbook: Chapter 13 Chapter 13. Disciplining Students with Disabilities • IDEA and Discipline • Manifestation Determination	Discussion Forum #11: Initial post; Responses to peers (Day 6) Module 11 quiz (Day 7)
11/10	Week of 11/10-11/16 Assignment: Case Law Analysis	Check the assignment guide and rubric in the course blackboard website.	Submission as directed
11/17	Week of 11/17-11/23 Final Exam Reviews Week Last Day to Drop the Class 11/20	FINAL EXAMS REVIEW WEEK	



11/24	Week of 11/25-12/30 Reading Day Thanksgiving Holidays 11/27-11/29	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS
12/1	Week of 12/03-12/09 Last Class Day 12/02 Final Examination Period	FINAL EXAM WEEK

University/College Policies

Please see the University Policies below.

COVID-19 Related Policies

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, please refer to the Student Handbook, Appendix A (Attendance Rule) for instructions.

Required Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class in person (or virtually, if the class is online) and to complete all assignments. If you cannot attend class, it is your responsibility to communicate absences with your professors. The faculty member will decide if your excuse is valid and thus may provide lecture materials of the class. According to University policy, acceptable reasons for an absence, which cannot affect a student's grade, include:

- Participation in an authorized University activity.
- Death or major illness in a student's immediate family.
- Illness of a dependent family member.
- Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
- Religious holy day.
- Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
- Required participation in military duties.
- Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled.

Students are responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to faculty members within seven calendar days of their absence and return to class. They must substantiate the reason for the absence. If the absence is excused, faculty members must either provide students with the opportunity to make up the exam or other work missed, or provide a satisfactory alternative to complete the exam or other work missed within 30 calendar days from the date of absence. Students who miss class due to a University-sponsored activity are responsible for identifying their absences to their instructors with as much advance notice as possible.

Classroom Behavior (applies to online or Face-to-Face Classes)

TAMIU encourages classroom discussion and academic debate as an essential intellectual activity. It is essential that students learn to express and defend their beliefs, but it is also essential that they learn to listen and respond respectfully to others whose beliefs they may not share. The University will always tolerate different, unorthodox, and unpopular points of view, but it will not tolerate condescending or insulting remarks. When students verbally abuse or ridicule and intimidate others whose views they do not agree with, they subvert the free exchange of ideas that should characterize a university classroom. If their actions are deemed by the professor to be disruptive, they will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action (please refer to Student Handbook Article 4).

TAMIU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

As a TAMIU student, you are bound by the TAMIU Honor Code to conduct yourself ethically in all your activities as a TAMIU student and to report violations of the Honor Code. Please read carefully the Student Handbook Article 7 and Article 10 available at <https://www.tamiau.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml> (<https://www.tamiau.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml/>).

We are committed to strict enforcement of the Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code tend to involve claiming work that is not one's own, most commonly plagiarism in written assignments and any form of cheating on exams and other types of assignments.

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own. It occurs when you:

1. Borrow someone else's facts, ideas, or opinions and put them entirely in your own words. You must acknowledge that these thoughts are not your own by immediately citing the source in your paper. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
2. Borrow someone else's words (short phrases, clauses, or sentences), you must enclose the copied words in quotation marks as well as citing the source. Failure to do this is plagiarism.

3. Present someone else's paper or exam (stolen, borrowed, or bought) as your own. You have committed a clearly intentional form of intellectual theft and have put your academic future in jeopardy. This is the worst form of plagiarism.

Here is another explanation from the 2020, seventh edition of the Manual of The American Psychological Association (APA):

"Plagiarism is the act of presenting the words, idea, or images of another as your own; it denies authors or creators of content the credit they are due. Whether deliberate or unintentional, plagiarism violates ethical standards in scholarship" (p. 254). This same principle applies to the illicit use of AI.

Plagiarism: Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotations marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Each time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text. The key element of this principle is that authors do not present the work of another as if it were their own words. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If authors model a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the discussion section of someone else's article, the person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important for the health of intellectual discourse, authors may not know where an idea for a study originated. If authors do know, however, they should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications (p. 11). For guidance on proper documentation, consult the Academic Success Center or a recommended guide to documentation and research such as the Manual of the APA or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. If you still have doubts concerning proper documentation, seek advice from your instructor prior to submitting a final draft.

TAMIU has penalties for plagiarism and cheating.

- **Penalties for Plagiarism:** Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student should receive a grade of 'F' in that course and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, may elect to give freshmen and sophomore students a "zero" for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of "F" (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade; the instructor must still report the offense to the Honor Council. This option should not be available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse. For repeat offenders in undergraduate courses or for an offender in any graduate course, the penalty for plagiarism is likely to include suspension or expulsion from the university.
 - **Caution:** Be very careful what you upload to Turnitin or send to your professor for evaluation. Whatever you upload for evaluation will be considered your final, approved draft. If it is plagiarized, you will be held responsible. The excuse that "it was only a draft" will not be accepted.
 - **Caution:** Also, do not share your electronic files with others. If you do, you are responsible for the possible consequences. If another student takes your file of a paper and changes the name to his or her name and submits it and you also submit the paper, we will hold both of you responsible for plagiarism. It is impossible for us to know with certainty who wrote the paper and who stole it. And, of course, we cannot know if there was collusion between you and the other student in the matter.
- **Penalties for Cheating:** Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam or quiz or other class project, the student should receive a "zero" for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident should be reported to the chair of the department and to the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an "F" in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Additional penalties, including suspension or expulsion from the university may be imposed. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an "F" in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a "W."
 - **Caution:** Chat groups that start off as "study groups" can easily devolve into "cheating groups." Be very careful not to join or remain any chat group if it begins to discuss specific information about exams or assignments that are meant to require individual work. If you are a member of such a group and it begins to cheat, you will be held responsible along with all the other members of the group. The TAMIU Honor Code requires that you report any such instances of cheating.
- **Student Right of Appeal:** Faculty will notify students immediately via the student's TAMIU e-mail account that they have submitted plagiarized work. Students have the right to appeal a faculty member's charge of academic dishonesty by notifying the TAMIU Honor Council of their intent to appeal as long as the notification of appeal comes within 10 business days of the faculty member's e-mail message to the student and/or the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement. The Student Handbook provides more details.

Use of Work in Two or More Courses

You may not submit work completed in one course for a grade in a second course unless you receive explicit permission to do so by the instructor of the second course. In general, you should get credit for a work product only once.

AI Policies

Your instructor will provide you with their personal policy on the use of AI in the classroom setting and associated coursework.

TAMIU E-Mail and SafeZone

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU E-mail (tamiu.edu or dusty email) are the official means of communicating course and university business with students and faculty –not the U.S. Mail and no other e-mail addresses. Students and faculty must check their TAMIU e-mail



accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMIU e-mail or message from a faculty member, chair, or dean is not accepted as an excuse for failure to take important action.

Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to download the SafeZone app, which is a free mobile app for all University faculty, staff, and students. SafeZone allows you to: report safety concerns (24/7), get connected with mental health professionals, activate location sharing with authorities, and anonymously report incidents. Go to <https://www.tamiau.edu/adminis/police/safezone/index.shtml> for more information.

Copyright Restrictions

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement. Civil and criminal penalties may be assessed for copyright infringement. Civil penalties include damages up to \$100,000; criminal penalties include a fine up to \$250,000 and imprisonment. Copyright laws do not allow students and professors to make photocopies of copyrighted materials, but you may copy a limited portion of a work, such as article from a journal or a chapter from a book for your own personal academic use or, in the case of a professor, for personal, limited classroom use. In general, the extent of your copying should not suggest that the purpose or the effect of your copying is to avoid paying for the materials. And, of course, you may not sell these copies for a profit. Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are violating the law.

Students with Disabilities

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Office of Student Counseling and Disability Services located in Student Center 126. This office will contact the faculty member to recommend specific, reasonable accommodations. Faculty are prohibited from making accommodations based solely on communications from students. They may make accommodations only when provided documentation by the Student Counseling and Disability Services office.

Student Attendance and Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy

As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule (Section 3.07) and the Student LOA Rule (Section 3.08), which includes the "Leave of Absence Request" form. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (URL: <http://www.tamiau.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.shtml> (<http://www.tamiau.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.shtml/>)).

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, harassment based on sex, including harassment because of pregnancy or related conditions, is prohibited. A pregnant/parenting student must be granted an absence for as long as the student's physician deems the absence medically necessary. It is a violation of Title IX to ask for documentation relative to the pregnant/parenting student's status beyond what would be required for other medical conditions. If a student would like to file a complaint for discrimination due to his or her pregnant/parenting status, please contact the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiau.edu, 956.326.2857) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office, U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600). You can also report it on TAMIU's anonymous electronic reporting site: <https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit/>).

TAMIU advises a pregnant/parenting student to notify their professor once the student is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is recommended that the student and professor develop a reasonable plan for the student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (Lorissa M. Cortez, lorissam.cortez@tamiau.edu) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodations. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students at the University, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student will need a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence (LOA) as outlined in the TAMIU Student Handbook. As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule and the Student LOA Rule. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (<https://www.tamiau.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml> (<https://www.tamiau.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml/>)).

Anti-Discrimination/Title IX

TAMIU does not discriminate or permit harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, educational programs, or employment. If you would like to file a complaint relative to Title IX or any civil rights violation, please contact the TAMIU Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity/Title IX Coordinator, Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, Killam Library 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiau.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt, at <https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit/>), and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.

Incompletes

Students who are unable to complete a course should withdraw from the course before the final date for withdrawal and receive a “W.” To qualify for an “incomplete” and thus have the opportunity to complete the course at a later date, a student must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have completed 90% of the course work assigned before the final date for withdrawing from a course with a “W”, and the student must be passing the course;
2. The student cannot complete the course because an accident, an illness, or a traumatic personal or family event occurred after the final date for withdrawal from a course;
3. The student must sign an “Incomplete Grade Contract” and secure signatures of approval from the professor and the college dean.
4. The student must agree to complete the missing course work before the end of the next long semester; failure to meet this deadline will cause the “I” to automatically be converted to an “F”; extensions to this deadline may be granted by the dean of the college. This is the general policy regarding the circumstances under which an “incomplete” may be granted, but under exceptional circumstances, a student may receive an incomplete who does not meet all of the criteria above if the faculty member, department chair, and dean recommend it.

WIN Contracts

The Department of Biology and Chemistry does not permit WIN contracts. For other departments within the college, WIN Contracts are offered only under exceptional circumstances and are limited to graduating seniors. Only courses offered by full-time TAMIU faculty or TAMIU instructors are eligible to be contracted for the WIN requirement. However, a WIN contract for a course taught by an adjunct may be approved, with special permission from the department chair and dean. Students must seek approval before beginning any work for the WIN Contract. No student will contract more than one course per semester. Summer WIN Contracts must continue through both summer sessions.

Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course

It is the responsibility of the student to drop the course before the final date for withdrawal from a course. Faculty members, in fact, may not drop a student from a course without getting the approval of their department chair and dean.

Independent Study Course

Independent Study (IS) courses are offered only under exceptional circumstances. Required courses intended to build academic skills may not be taken as IS (e.g., clinical supervision and internships). No student will take more than one IS course per semester. Moreover, IS courses are limited to seniors and graduate students. Summer IS course must continue through both summer sessions.

Grade Changes & Appeals

Faculty are authorized to change final grades only when they have committed a computational error or an error in recording a grade, and they must receive the approval of their department chairs and the dean to change the grade. As part of that approval, they must attach a detailed explanation of the reason for the mistake. Only in rare cases would another reason be entertained as legitimate for a grade change. A student who is unhappy with his or her grade on an assignment must discuss the situation with the faculty member teaching the course. If students believe that they have been graded unfairly, they have the right to appeal the grade using a grade appeal process in the Student Handbook and in the Faculty Handbook.

Final Examination

All courses in all colleges must include a comprehensive exam or performance and be given on the date and time specified by the Academic Calendar and the Final Exam schedule published by the Registrar’s Office. In the College of Arts & Sciences all final exams must contain a written component. The written component should comprise at least 20% of the final exam grade. Exceptions to this policy must receive the approval of the department chair and the dean at the beginning of the semester.

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it. The Telus app is available to download directly from TELUS (tamiu.edu) (<https://www.tamiu.edu/counseling/telus/>) or from the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Distance Education Courses

Syllabus Subject to Change: While information and assurances are provided in this course syllabus, content may change in keeping with new research and literature and events beyond the control of the instructor. Students will be informed of any substantive occurrences that will produce syllabus changes.

Exam Requirement

Respondus LockDown Browser (Free) and Monitor (\$15 fee) Requirement

This course requires the use of LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor (webcam) for online exams. The webcam can be built into your computer or can be the type that plugs in with a USB cable.

Watch this short video (<http://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml/>) to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor (the webcam feature). A Student Quick Start Guide (PDF) (<http://www.respondus.com/products/monitor/guides.shtml/>) is also available.

Download Instructions

Click the **Student Support** top-middle tab located in Blackboard. Scroll down to the *Instructional Technologies* section, and click on the *Respondus LockDown Browser* icon. Download is **free**.

Once Installed

- Open LockDown Browser
- Log into Blackboard Learn
- Navigate to the test and begin

Note: You won't be able to access tests with a standard web browser. If this is tried, an error message will indicate that the test requires the use of LockDown Browser. Simply start LockDown Browser and navigate back to the exam to continue.

Cost for Respondus Monitor

There is a **\$15 fee** for the webcam feature that's used with LockDown Browser (sometimes referred to as Respondus Monitor). This is a one-time fee, valid for 12 months (365 days) for all courses or exams that use Respondus Monitor. You will be prompted to make the purchase the first time an exam requires the use of LockDown Browser's webcam feature. Payment can be made with PayPal, Visa or Mastercard.

To pay for Respondus Monitor:

1. Start Respondus LockDown Browser (http://www.jsu.edu/online/current-students/resp_lock_browser_students.html).
2. Navigate to your test.
3. Complete the set-up process, which includes a payment screen for entering credit card information.
4. Payment and entering credit card information is only necessary one-time per course.

Guidelines

When taking an online exam that requires LockDown Browser and a webcam, remember the following guidelines:

- Select a location where you won't be interrupted
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and also that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it
- Turn off all other devices (e.g. tablets, phones, second computers)
- Clear your area of all external materials — books, papers, other devices
- Remain at your computer for the duration of the test
- To produce a good webcam video, do the following:
 - o Avoid wearing baseball caps or hats with brims
 - Ensure your computer or tablet is on a firm surface (a desk or table) — not on your lap, a bed, or other surface that might move
 - If using a built-in webcam, avoid tilting the screen after the webcam setup is complete
 - Take the exam in a well-lit room and avoid backlighting, such as sitting with your back to a window
 - LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted.

Getting Help

Several resources are available if you encounter problems with LockDown Browser.

- The Windows and Mac versions of LockDown Browser have a "Help Center" button located on the toolbar. Use the "System & Network Check" to troubleshoot issues.



If you have problems downloading, installing, or taking a test with Respondus LockDown Browser, email the TAMIU eLearning Team at elearning@tamiu.edu.

Webcam Checkout for Personal Computer:

If students are unable to use personal or borrowed computers and equipment, students may stop by the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services office to check out webcams (with built-in microphones). The office is located at **Killam Library 259** (down the hall from the HelpDesk) and is open **Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.** Checkout for a webcam is on a first-come, first-service basis. Speak with an eLearning staff member to checkout a camera. Students will sign an Equipment Loaner Agreement, making them responsible for the care of the camera. Webcams checked out must be returned within five business days of the checkout date.

Technology Requirements:

Computer/Technology Requirements

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Online students will need regular access to a personal computer that runs on a broadband Internet connection.

It is recommended that you meet the technical requirements listed on the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage (<http://www.tamiu.edu/distance/students/technology-requirements.shtml/>) when using the learning management system (LMS) of the University.

Additional Hardware. For this class, you will need the following additional hardware: a webcam and microphone. Recently purchased laptops may have these built-in web cameras. If you do not have this equipment, it is recommended to purchase a stand-alone webcam, microphone or a webcam with a built-in microphone from your local electronic store or any online store.

NOTE: Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services may check out available webcams to students on a first-come, first-served basis. To check out a webcam, please stop by Killam Library, Room 259 and request an available webcam.

Additional Software. You will need the following additional software: Microsoft PowerPoint for viewing lesson presentations and Microsoft Word for viewing course files and submitting assignments. TAMIU Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account at <https://dusty.tamiu.edu/>. This site also provides students access to download the Microsoft suite for educational use. See instructions for downloading the Microsoft Office suite (<http://www.tamiu.edu/distance/documents/Microsoft-Office-2016-Download-Instructions.pdf>).

Note: Students, if you do not own the required hardware, software or do not have access to internet, it will be highly challenging for you to make any progress in this class. However, my goal is to assist you to find solutions and guide you appropriately most of the required materials can either be found free of charge at TAMIU's library, computer labs, and classrooms. In addition, you may also purchase any of these items at any electronic store.

Learning Management System (Blackboard)

Students are provided with guides on how to use the Blackboard LMS. Guides may be available at Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' Student eLearning Tutorial Videos page (<http://www.tamiu.edu/distance/students/elearning-orientation.shtml/>) or by contacting the eLearning team at elearning@tamiu.edu.

Technical Support Services

Because of the nature of distance education courses, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) computing and information services are vital to the success of online students. This webpage covers contact information for Distance Education Services (Blackboard Support), the OIT Help Desk, and E-mail support: Technical Support Services (<http://www.tamiu.edu/distance/technical-support-services.shtml/>).